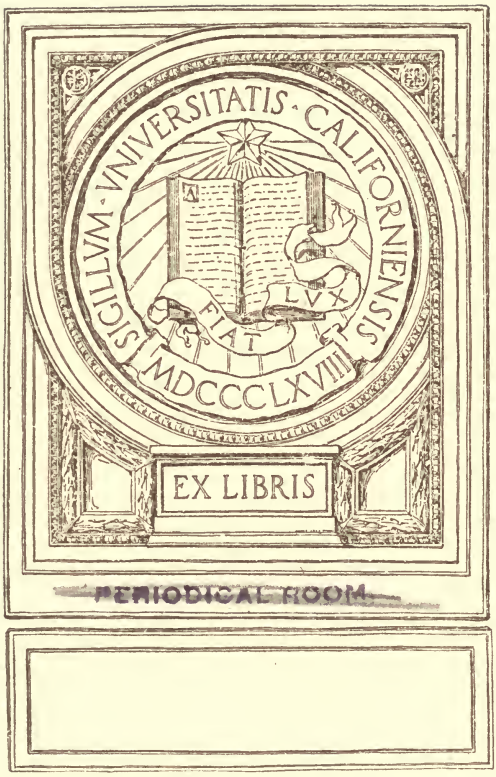

PERIODICAL ROOM

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A SERMON DELIVERED BEFORE

WINFIELD SCOTT POST, No. 114

DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA
GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC

At Gethsemane Baptist Church

By REV. BYRON A. WOODS, D.D.

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Isaiah 5, 26-27: "None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken: whose arrows are sharp and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, their wheels like a whirlwind."

IT WAS March 4, 1865, dark, drizzly as stern November. The shameful spectacle by which Andrew Johnson disgraced himself and humiliated the nation was over. The President-elect attended by high officials, passed from the Senate chamber out to the inauguration platform, on the east front of the Capitol. The thunders of applause ceased as Abraham Lincoln stepped forward and began reading his second inaugural. "At that moment the sun, which had been obscured all day, burst forth in its unclouded meridian splendor, and flooded the spectacle with glory and with light." The last words of that matchless address fell upon the ears of the hushed, prayerful, tearful throng: "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.' " "With malice towards none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

The last word spoken, Abraham Lincoln turned to the Chief Justice; the Bible was opened: laying his right hand reverenlyt

upon the open page, he repeated the oath of office, then solemnly kissed the Book, saying, as he did so, "So help me God," and rose up inaugurated President of the United States for the second term. The Chief Justice himself had noticed the place where his lips had. touched the inspired page. Is it strange that he and others felt the significance of the words?

> None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken; whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows are bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, their wheels like a whirlwind."

It was in the spirit of these words that Abraham Lincoln undertook the toil and burden, and the care of the Chief Magistracy for the second time. Experience had taught him how crushing was the load; but he had neither grown weary nor stumbled in bearing it; his loins were still girded, his shoes latched for the way.

Tonight I am to say something about this marvelous man—this man whose life is the consummate flower of American history, whose character is the ripest fruitage thereof.

It is a service from which many better fitted and furnished than I have shrunk. The name of Abraham Lincoln is sacred, baptized with the tears and blood of the best of our land. The story of his life is the sweetest, saddest, dearest among the archives of the Nation. As the great historian has said, "Abraham Lincoln went through life bearing the load of a people's sorrows with a smiling face. As long as he lived he was the guiding star of a whole brave nation, and when he died the little children cried in the streets." In him nature was at its best,

> "For him her Old World moulds aside she threw,
> And choosing sweet clay from the breast
> Of the unexhausted West,
> With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
> Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true."

It takes an artist to paint a mountain crowned with snow, circled with cloud, gilded with the summer sun; to fill in the foliage

that drapes its noble form, to portray the snow-born streams that tumble down its tumultuous sides, and anon break in silvery veils, or glow with prismatic beauty; to represent the houses and barns, the flocks and herds, the harvest fields and pasture lands, that cover its fruitful slopes; and to outline the beautiful valleys and broad acres that lie at its base—it requires an artist to do that. And yet an humbler hand may sketch its heroic lines, intimate its beauties, and suggest its glories. Though I cannot do the one permit me to attempt the other. Permit me to lay a way-side flower—love's token—upon the altar of his greatness.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS GREAT IN NATURAL ENDOWMENT

It took six feet four inches of bone and brawn, of sinew and muscle to carry the load and endure the strain of his mighty intellect, and to house the great throbbing heart that beat for all humanity; the two engines that labored and toiled within that gaunt, homely frame of his.

He had great powers of perception. He saw things, truths, facts and men, what they were in themselves, and in their relations. He could "grasp the situation," whether political, military, philosophic or statesmanic. He could note the beginnings of great movements, calculate their progress, and foretell the issue, as few men have ever done.

He had unsurpassed reasoning powers. His addresses were not political harangues, but masterly arguments based upon fundamental principles. When professors and ministers from cultured New England asked him how he attained his marvelous way of putting things, a method such that the statement of his position was itself an argument, he replied that early in legal life he had spent weeks in mastering the problems of geometry, that he might know what the word "demonstration" meant. His was the power to demonstrate the truth he uttered.

This gave him marvelous influence over his hearers. He ap-

prehended the foundation principles himself, and then caused them to apprehend them also. Other men skimmed the surface, he went to the bottom; they saw the symptoms, he the disease. English statesmen visited him, and, referring to the great loss of life in the battles fought, were surprised to have him reply with statistics drawn from their own history showing their losses had been greater in proportion, and departing declared that he was a surprise to them, and that undoubtedly future generations would rank him among the greatest men the world had produced. Generals of the army sometimes spoke lightly of his military plans, only to awake at last to the realization that his plan of campaign, if adopted would undoubtedly have brought victory, when theirs was followed by disaster.

During the first months of his presidency men attempted to take from his hands the reins of government, but found in him a master-mind and an iron will before which they were compelled to bow, and finally to render glad homage. Even Mr. Seward, experienced, able, eminent in the nation, found his words concerning the adoption of a policy and the resolute prosecution of it, "either by the President" or "some member of the cabinet," met by the calm, dignified reply, "If this must be done, I must do it," and awoke from his dream of personal glory to realize that Abraham Lincoln was President, and he himself Secretary of State—nothing more.

This intellectual greatness has been one of the things men have been slow to recognize in the man. They knew that he was honest, kind of heart, true, devoted, but that he was incomparably, superlatively great they could not realize. Perhaps it was because of his humble birth, perhaps because of his deficient education, perhaps because of his homely but apt metaphors, perhaps because of his gaunt ugliness, perhaps it was because they stood so near him they could not apprehend his magnitude; be the reason what it may the fact remains, he was greater than their great-

est conceptions, nobler than their noblest thoughts. A generation has passed and we do not know him yet. A second, and possibly a third must come before men will fully appreciate his character, and properly estimate his work. When you are climbing Mt. Blanc, you do not realize its height, you must be miles away to see it in its totality and feel its magnitude.

The men who toiled by Lincoln's side did not know him. William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Horace Greeley were great men, and each in his way did a great work for freedom and humanity. But they were not able to understand Lincoln. They could not rise to the mountain-height from which he surveyed the field. They could not comprehend the principles which were the A B C of his life. They never saw the present as he saw it. They never planned the future as he planned it, seeing the end from the beginning. And so they criticised and said and wrote bitter things: "He was slow, he was treacherous, he lacked moral earnestness, he must be supplanted."

Garrison and Phillips hurled poisoned arrows, and denounced him to his face, while Greeley plotted for peace behind his back, holding correspondence with the enemies of the nation and the cause, hindering by so much the speedy victory for which Lincoln was patiently, persistently, surely toiling.

And when the end drew nigh and the final triumphs were ready to drop, like ripened fruit, into the lap of the nation, because Lincoln went to Hampton Roads, and unofficially, informally, and at the earnest request of General Grant, met the men who had come from the Confederacy, and declared to them the only terms upon which propositions of peace or armistice could or would be considered—because Lincoln with wise foresight saw the opportunity of unmasking false pretensions and thereby strengthening the cause, and seized the opportunity, Senators and Congressmen denounced him upon the floor of the Capitol, and passed

resolutions demanding an account of his doings. It would seem as if they ought to have understood him better by that time, as if they ought to have had more confidence in the sagacity and honesty of the man who had so ably guided the affairs of the nation during the years that had gone. But no, they did not understand him, they did not understand the situation. And so they uttered words they gladly would have blotted from history, and brought pain and anguish to the heart of one who carried the burdens of the nation.

The abolitionists erred because they did not see that Lincoln was sworn to support the Constitution, and therefore could not emancipate the slaves until it became evident that only so could the Constitution itself be preserved. And Senators and Congressmen erred because they did not see, as he saw, the effect, the necessary effect, of putting the words "our common country" over against the words of Davis concerning "the two countries." They did not realize, and we are only too slow to acknowledge, that Abraham Lincoln alone embodied, not only the heart of the people, but the brains of the nation as well.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS GREAT IN UNSWERVING DEVOTION TO LIBERTY

He is twenty-one years of age. They are in the city of New Orleans. Slaves are being bought and sold. With his companions he visits a slave pen, while an auction is in progress. He marks how rough men handle young women and discuss in vulgar terms their merits or demerits. Turning to his companion, his giant frame trembling with righteous indignation, he registers his vow: "If ever I get a chance to hit that institution, I'll hit it hard, by the Eternal God!"

The first great opportunity to "hit" the institution came to Lincoln in the campaign of 1854.

In reply to Douglas, these burning words fell from his lips:

"This declared indifference to the spread of slavery I can but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. If the negro is a man is it not the destruction of self-government to say that he shall not govern himself? When a white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and another man, that is more than self-government, it is despotism. No man is good enough to govern another man without his consent. Slavery is founded on the selfishness of man's nature; opposition to it is his love of justice. These principles are in eternal antagonism."

"Never did a man," said Lincoln's law partner, Mr. Herndon, "change as did Mr. Lincoln. No sooner had he planted himself right on the slavery question than his whole soul seemed burning. He blossomed right out. Spiritual things became clear to him."

Again he meets Douglas; it is just after the Dred Scott decision. "In my opinion it (this agitation) will not cease until a crisis has been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand,' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other." When friends remonstrated with him, saying those words would injure him politically, defeat his election and possibly ruin his party Lincoln listened, rose, stood erect. The old far-away look came into his face. "My friends, I have given much thought to this question. The time has come when these sentiments should be uttered. If it is decreed that I should go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked with it to the truth. Let me die in the advocacy of what is just and right." Listen again to his words, in reply to the same opponent. "Think nothing of me; take no thought for the political fate of any man whatsoever, but come back to the truths that are in the Declaration of Independence. You may do anything with me you choose, if you will but

heed these sacred principles. You may not only defeat me for the Senate, but you may take me and put me to death. While pretending no indifference to earthly honors, I do claim to be actuated in this contest by something higher than an anxiety for office. I charge you to drop every paltry and insignificant thought for any man's success. It is nothing. I am nothing. Judge Douglas is nothing. But do not destroy that immortal emblem of humanity, the Declaration of Independence."

I cannot repeat his many ringing words that echoed round the world in advocacy of the principles of liberty. Thank God, today they are household words.

I may be permitted, however, to refer to one other occasion upon which he gave proof even more strikingly of his steadfast devotion to the cause of freedom. It was near the close of his first term in the Presidency, 1864. It was one of the darkest periods of the war. People were clamoring for peace. Horace Greeley was imploring, begging, demanding, that he make overtures for peace, or at least an armistice for one year. There were divisions and dissensions in the Cabinet. Congressmen were angry because he had not signed the bill for the re-admission of seceded states into the Union. "Your re-election," wrote Thurlow Weed to the President, "is an impossibility."

Lincoln himself said to his intimate acquaintances, "I doubt if I shall be re-elected." August 23rd, 1864, was the day for the regular meeting of President and Cabinet. When the members of the Cabinet were assembled, Lincoln handed them a sealed envelope, with a paper folded within. "Gentlemen," he said, "will you do me a favor, will you please write your names upon this envelope?" He made no explanation; they asked no questions, but did as requested, and the package was laid away. What was written there, so carefully sealed, so surely certified? These were the words, written with his own hand:

"This morning, as for several days past, it seems probable that this Administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to so co-operate with the President-elect as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration, as he will have secured his election on such grounds that he cannot possibly save it afterwards." Here was devotion, pure and simply, unselfish and heroic. He might go down and his administration fall, but his last breath should be expended for the nation and principles he loved.

But Lincoln was re-elected, and lived, not only to give slavery its death blow—hitting it hard, as he had vowed—but also to celebrate the victorious ending of the struggle.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS GREAT BECAUSE OF HIS RELIANCE UPON ALMIGHTY GOD

"I believe," writes Ruskin, "the first test of a truly great man is his humility. I do not mean by humility, doubt of his own power, or hesitation in speaking his opinion. But really great men have a curious undersense of powerlessness, feeling that the greatness is not in them but through them; that they could not do or be anything else than God made them. And they see something divine and God-made in every other man, and are endlessly, foolishly, incredibly merciful." Horace Bushnell says, "The great master-spirits of the world are not so much distinguished, after all, by the acts they do as by the sense itself of some mysterious girding of the Almighty upon them, whose behests they are set to fulfil." In harmony with these words of wisdom and of truth, Abraham Lincoln declared, "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me. No human council has devised, nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are of the gracious gifts of the Most High God."

Lincoln's religious nature was influenced by the Puritans on the one hand and the Quakers on the other. From his mother he

received instruction in the Bible and in the ways of righteousness, as well as a deep under-current of reverence and devotion, symbolized in them both by "that far-away look" that so often arrested attention.

Early in life, there came a religious crisis. It was just after he had failed to meet his engagement and marry her who afterward became his wife. A deep melancholy had come over him. Possibly the great brain was trembling on its throne. Anyhow, and happily, devout friends received him into their home, and into the inner circle of faith. An intelligent Christian woman speaks to him of God as a Father, and Jesus Christ as a brother, and new truths dawn, and the old Book receives diviner light. Little by little the bewildered wanderer is led out of the desert of despair and unbelief, into the light of life and glory. From that hour doubt is gone, never to return; from that hour the Bible becomes his rule of life and duty.

When the time of trial came he declared to his friends, "I know there is a God, and that he hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If He has a place for me, and I think He has, I believe I am ready. . . . With God's help I shall not fail."

Time passes, he is now leaving his home for Washington. A few last words are spoken ere the train departs: "I now leave, not knowing when or whether I may ever return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

And now the curtains of the White House are drawn low.

Little Willie lies near the river. The father's great heart is breaking. The nurse says, "Mr. Lincoln, a great many people are praying for you today." "I am glad to hear it," he replies, "I want them to pray for me, I need their prayers, and I will try to go to God with my sorrow." Later the minister tells him his Willie is alive. "Alive! alive!" he exclaims. "Yes, Mr. Lincoln, alive. Jesus Christ has said it." The old truth came into his soul no longer an abstract doctrine, but a blessed fact, to be accepted and realized. And Lincoln clasped in his arms the man who had opened his eyes to one of God's most precious promises.

Again, the time for the Emancipation Proclamation has come. Lincoln does not consult his Cabinet as to the question of its issue. A victory has been gained, and Lincoln says, "I have made a vow —a covenant—that if God should give us victory in battle I would consider it an indication of the divine will, and that it would be our duty to move forward with emancipation."

The battle of Gettysburg had been won. When a general asked Lincoln if he had not been anxious as to the result, he replied that he had been confident of victory. They asked, why? But he hesitated, and would not say until repeatedly urged to do so. "Well," he says, "I will tell you. Before the battle, I retired alone to my room in the White House, and got down on my knees and prayed to the Almighty God to give us the victory. I said to Him that this was His war, and that if He would stand by the nation now, I would stand by Him the rest of my life. He gave us the victory, and I purpose to keep my pledge. I arose from my knees with a feeling of deep and serene confidence, and had no doubt of the result from that hour."

At another time Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Fessenden were in confidential conversation. Mr. Fessenden asked him how far he believed the Almighty actually directed our national affairs. Slowly and solemnly, he replied, "That the Almighty does make use of

human agencies, and directly intervenes in human affairs, is one of the plainest statements of the Bible. I have had so many evidences of His direction, so many instances when I have been controlled by some other power than my own will, that I cannot doubt that this power comes from above. I am satisfied that when the Almighty wants me to do or not do a particular thing, He finds a way of letting me know it . . . . . At first, I used to lose heart sometimes. Now I seem to know that Providence has protected and will protect us against any fatal defeat. All we have to do is to trust the Almighty and keep right on obeying His orders and executing His will."

Lee surrenders, the war draws to its close. Washington is ablaze with glory. The universal joy cannot be restrained. The crowds gather; Lincoln speaks. "The tired spot" which he said "nothing touched" is rested. The man who declared "I do not think I shall ever be glad again" is gladdened. The country saved, the nation redeemed, all he has labored for, prayed for, lived for has been accomplished. His address to the people he so ably served begins with the reminder, "We meet this evening in gladness of heart . . . . In the midst of this, He 'from whom all blessings flow' must not be forgotten; a call for a national thanksgiving is being prepared and will be duly promulgated." It is his last public utterance. His official life closes as it began—with his face turned towards the Great White Throne. He has rounded out the circle of his greatness; henceforth Abraham Lincoln "belongs to the ages." And tonight, "The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land" do "swell the chorus of the Union, touched again, as surely they have been, by the better angels of our nature."

THE DARKEST HOUR.

EVERYBODY is more or less superstitious. However unwilling we may be to confess it, there are times when we cannot resist superstition, but yield to its sway. Examples from daily life are innumerable, beginning with the days of the emperor who could not endure the presence of a cat in the same room, and coming down to these days when the last guest finds that he makes the unwelcome thirteenth at the table and politely refuses to remain. The farmer who sees the new moon over his left shoulder, and the sailor who will not set sail from port on Friday, are common illustrations.

Without combating this common trait or endeavoring to reason away its cause, arising so largely as it does through illogical deductions from seeming coincidences, let me tell you of an instance in my own experience.

If any one can claim the right to be superstitious about a play at the theatre, I claim to be of the number. Three times I have purchased tickets for "Our American Cousin," desiring to see Sothern in it, but I have never seen it. The sickness of a star actor compelled a change in the title *rôle* the first time; I was called away out of town the second time: and the assassination of President Lincoln abruptly terminated the third time, under such circumstances, conditions and tragical surroundings that I called that night the "*darkest hour.*"

The winter of 1865 found me on duty with Major-General A. P. Howe, inspector of artillery, with headquarters in Washington. He also had command of Camp Barry, which was an artillery dépôt for instructing, equipping and repairing batteries of artillery.

—Read by the late Brevet Brigadier-General Charles Mamlin before the Maine Commandery of the Loyal Legion.

On that fatal night, accompanied by my wife and sister, I went somewhat early to Ford's Theatre both to hear the patriotic music of the orchestra and to witness the entrance of the President, who had accepted an invitation to witness the play, with a party of invited guests. We obtained seats only a few steps behind the orchestra on the side next to the box, second tier, assigned to the Presidential party,—being on your right as you enter the auditorium. We found the theatre already well filled· the front of the boxes beautifully decorated with flags. The orchestra lost no time in expressing the loyal joy of the jubilant throng in soul-stirring passages, comprising choice selection of all the National airs. These airs were repeated at the request of the audience which did not seem impatient for the curtain to rise. Then followed a long interval of silence The illustrious guest of the evening had not arrived. Whispers ran round the house that he would not come, and finally the manager yielded to the calls and the curtain slowly rung up and the play began. The first act, however, was only fairly beginning when it was suspended with a loud outburst of "Hail to the Chief," by the orchestra, in welcoming with the cheers of the audience,—all standing up,—the much-expected President, who modestly bowed as he quietly moved along the wall and with his wife and friends entered the box.

Quiet was resumed and *Dundreary* was soon lisping, in inimitable drollery, his opening words. The people now gave their undivided attention to the play, happy to share its humor, wit and gaiety with one who had earned that right, if ever relief, followed by relaxation, was due to one who had led the nation through the sea of trouble to a triumphant ending. It would be difficult indeed, to conceive of higher conditions for people's enjoyment and the chief magistrate's brief hour of freedom from care and anxiety. How often since have I recalled the scene! All eyes were radiant with the joy of life. "Grim-visaged war had smoothed his wrinkled front" and the bronzed veterans' uniforms, here and there, set off

in fine contrast the rich apparel and adornments of their fair companions. The air was redolent of peace and happiness. The scene was so impressive that it must have had its influence on the President himself, for he did not move after taking a seat in the front corner, next to the audience, whence he could see almost the entire auditorium and the stage.

The following events, but not the length of time, remain indelibly fixed in my memory. I am confident of the accuracy of their succession and I will now state them in their order:

After one or more scenes,—they may be all in the first act,—the actors had left the stage and scenery slides quite near the front were run out from each wing to represent one side of a room. They did not come together and join at the center with that ease and certainty which are found in well-managed theatres. They bumped together, shot past each other, were pulled back again at a short distance, and then hurriedly thrown together but not uniting. One form was lifted up once or twice when both forms seemed to be joined, but were suddenly pulled slightly apart again and remained so. Momentarily expecting, in this condition of bungling scene-shifting, that the defect would be noticed by the person in charge, and watching both ends of the stage for the entrance of the next actor, as well as the proper adjustment of the scene, the delay in both seems unusually prolonged. Suddenly a pistol shot is heard. To me its direction is from the stage, and I think it is part of the next act, never having seen the play and not knowing its plot. Still no actor comes out. The scenes remain unadjusted. A slight murmur runs through the audience,—it is the suppressed voices of the men and women criticising the delay or questions asking its cause. Time enough has now elapsed to arouse the curious and impatient who rise in their places just as a man is seen standing on the outer edge of the President's box. He suddenly jumps down upon the stage, landing, after a flight of nearly fifteen

feet, in a crouched position about six or eight feet from the side of the tier of boxes. He rises, and with his face to the audience he walks leisurely to the center of the stage as if he belonged to the troupe and was entering upon his part. As he faces the audience in the center of the stage, about ten or twelve feet from the footlights, we get a clear view of him. He is dressed in faultless black, the opening of his vest disclosing a white shirt front, then not often seen by us of the army. His face, surmounted by waving black hair, has a deathly pallor and his eyes are glittering bright, almost emitting fire. Spellbound, never dreaming of the awful tragedy which had already taken place, the audience intently observes the man in his every movement, and wondering still what his appearance means and how it is connected with the play.

Halting at the center with his face to the audience, as I have, already described him, he hissed out these words, *Sic semper tyrannis*, raising a dagger in his right hand above his head with the flashing blade pointing down. With these words that I have quoted, he dropped his hand, turned towards the right of the stage, the left of the audience, and deliberately marched with a stage gait from our sight and disappeared through the wings on that side.

It is not easy to describe the effect produced upon the audience nor the precise order of events. I now recall my sister's speaking to me and saying, "Why, that's Wilkes Booth!' Also my reply "It is not possible. He is not down on the bill." A voice in the audience cried out, "The President is shot." This was the first intimation to me of what had happened,—the awful tragedy itself. I started up from my seat to ascertain if it was true and to see what I could do. Several persons in my vicinity tried to cross over the orchestra to the stage. One of them, who proved to be a naval officer,—Flood, of the U. S. S. *Primrose*,—as I learned from his card which he gave me the next day at his hotel,—succeeded in the attempt and climbed into the President's box by clinging to the wood ornamentation overlaying its front.

There was immediate confusion, and cries of alarm and horror were raised as soon as it was stated that the President had been shot, and no one seemed to know what to do. A gentleman on the extreme left gained the stage, as I now remember, at nearly the same time with Flood. He spoke in an excited manner and passed at once behind the wing on that side. This was J. B. Stewart, of Washington, a dealer in real estate of some prominence. In his testimony afterwards before the military commission, he claimed to have been the first person to reach the stage, and to have been wounded by dagger thrusts or cuts given by the assassin.

As soon as I could make my way through the retiring audience I ran up the stairs leading to the second story and found they were just bringing the President out of his box,—his wife leading the way with her dress covered with blood, weeping and moaning and wringing her hands all the while with most heartrending sobs. Laura Keene, the leading lady in the play, had preceded me and stood in front of Mrs. Lincoln calling out from time to time as the sad procession moved on towards the stairway,—"For God's sake, gentlemen, let this poor woman pass." As her hands and dress were stained with blood it seems that she must have entered the box, as soon as the door was pushed open and assisted in removing the dying man. I followed the President across the street as far as the house where he was taken in, and where he breathed his last. Waiting to see how I could render service I encountered Lieutenant Parsons of the 4th United States Artillery, who told me that Grant, Stanton, Seward and Vice-President Johnson, had also been assassinated. This was, indeed, the *darkest hour*. It all foreboded insurrection, an uprising of rebels and assassins by night in the capital city. Instantly I thought of my duty and determined, at all hazards, to do what was in my power to prevent such a horrible atrocity. I ran to our headquarters, more than a mile distant, at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and H Street, and sent word to Major Hall, and in the name of General Howe ordered out

all the batteries at Camp Barry to take position immediately at all the street crossings leading from the great avenues, remaining myself at our office. The order was duly executed and the batteries remained in position until the afternoon of the next day. At frequent intervals I reported to the War Department until seven o'clock in the morning, when I learned by a daily morning paper of the President's death and the escape from the assassin of all others except Mr. Seward.

As I am giving a personal account only of the awful tragedy, but little more remains to be told. The rest is public history and I will add but one other event.

General Howe and General Augur were among the high officers who constituted the guard of honor at the Executive Mansion until the funeral, and remained in the room with the sacred body. I was called there early in the morning of the third day to receive orders from General Howe, who called me into the room. Mr. Stanton came in soon and seemed engaged in viewing the remains and their proper apparel. General Howe spoke to him of the discoloration of one side of the face and inquired of Mr. Stanton whether something could not be done to remove it before the public were allowed to take a last look at their beloved President. I shall never forget the reply, when turning to the general his eyes suffused and with trembling lips he gave a deep sigh and in gentle and subdued tones said, "General, it is best as it is. It is now part of the history of the case."

Turning slowly away, I took my last, long look at the great martyr, who now belongs to all the ages; who had always been to me personally as kind as my father; and the friendly grasp of whose hand will remain in my memory an eternal benediction.

The *darkest hour* passed away, but whether I shall ever see "Our American Cousin" I cannot say.

CHARLES HAMLIN.

MR. LINCOLN IN MAY, 1862

The writer of the following account was Rev. W. W. Malet, Vicar of Ardeley, Hertfordshire, England, who came to the United States in June 1862, to communicate with an English lady living in South Carolina on matters relating to her family in England.

Through a letter from Mr. Adams, our Minister to England to Mr. Seward, he was allowed to go to South Carolina, and on his return to England published an account of his experiences, under the title of "An Errand to the South"—now a rare book—from which the item is taken.—[Ed.]

PRESIDENT Lincoln and Mr. Secretary Seward were both in the next room, and at my request Mr. Stanton introduced me to them.

The President, who was neatly dressed in a suit of black, is full six feet two inches in height, of spare and upright figure; his hair is black, his eyes have a remarkably calm expression; his features are strongly marked, his complexion dark, his address and manner betokening perfect self-possession; very ready to enter into conversation and to set you at once at your ease.

A perfect contrast is Mr. Seward; a man of small stature, rather grey, with prominent nose and penetrating eyes; reserved in manner. When I first saw him in the corridor he wore a broad-brimmed Mexican hat, and was smoking his cigar.

Next day I paid my respects to the President at the White House, and was most kindly received. He told me he was born in 1809; and remarked that when employed as a lawyer to settle the French claims in Illinois, he had met with my name. We pored together over a comparative chart of rivers, which showed that America had the two largest rivers in the world—Mississippi and Amazon—the former 4400 miles long! He told me they used hard unbituminous coal in the United States Navy, giving great force of fire without the slightest smoke, so that the approach of their men-of-war is not seen over the horizon or in rivers. He lamented the occurrence of the war, observing that "if he could have foreseen it he would not have accepted the office of President." After I had sat in conversation with Mr. Lincoln about twenty minutes Mr. Seward came in, when I took my leave, both shaking me cordially by the hand—Mr. Seward not speaking a word, but with an expression in his hand and look as if he knew my errand and wished me success.

LINCOLN PLAYBILLS

From the Boston *Transcript* of Sept. 3, 1913, we take this interesting account of the LINCOLN PLAYBILLS, as an appropriate addition to our EXTRA.

MOST collectors of Lincoln relics are familiar with the appearance of the playbill issued at Ford's Theatre in Washington on the evening when the President was assassinated, but many yet seem unaware of the different varieties, and which of these are genuine. Not a year passes without several being sold in the auction rooms or at private sale, and several collectors boast of copies "stained with Lincoln's blood," a brown stain on the bill being shown in proof. Needless to say, authentication in the latter cases is hopelessly lacking; they were all "picked up in the box the same night," and with that statement alone the owner is more or less satisfied, generally more.

Two genuine playbills only were printed, and those bearing the legend "This Evening the Performance will be honored by the presence of President Lincoln," or variations, are much later productions than April 14, 1865. Both the varieties of the genuine bill have imprint at bottom "H. Polkinhorn & Son, Printers, D street, near 7th, Washington, D. C." The rarer of the two can be distinguished by the omission at the bottom of the sheet of "The Prices of Admission," this omission, together with a little condensation above allowing the printer to insert a verse as follows:

PATRIOTIC SONG AND CHORUS

Honor To Our Soldiers

Honor to our soldiers,
Our nation's greatest pride,
Who 'neath our starry banner's folds,
Have fought, and bled, and died;
They're nature's noblest handiwork—
No king so proud as they,
God bless the heroes of the land,
And cheer them on their way.

Words by H. B. Phillips; music composed and arranged by Professor William Withers, Jr.; solos by Miss M. Hart, H. B. Phillips and George N. Arth and the ladies and gentlemen of the company.

This has been facsimiled, but they are not common and the facsimiles can with little difficulty be detected by the appearance of the paper and types when reproduced by photographic process; when reproduced with type the words "The Octoroon" prove a stumbling-block, as in the original the type used is a curious, almost outline capital, the centres of the outline dotted with marks resembling a curved "v," or precisely the marks a painter uses in representing flying birds at a distance. This type seems to have been a poser to all reproducers in type, for none of the facsimiles in type reproduce it, the nearest being one where the "T," for instance is the shape of the Greek "Upsilon," and the other letters having straight or convex sides instead of concave as in the genuine. This playbill was issued in the afternoon when it was known President Lincoln was to attend the evening performance.

THE FACSIMILED PLAYBILL

The commoner playbill, and the one usually occurring and facsimiled, is that printed in the morning of the day, before it was known that Lincoln would attend. The main difference is that it does not contain the verse and lines immediately above and below and has the prices of admission. Another difference is "Mr. John Dyott and Mr. Harry Hawk" occupy three lines; in the "verse playbill" the words are compressed into one line and the "Mr." omitted from each.

It is important in the detection of facsimiles and forgeries to note resemblances in these two bills, for both were evidently printed from the same form with the mere removal of the lines giving the prices of admission, and the condensation of the names of the two star actors from three lines into one, the rest of the type standing bodily in its place or removed bodily slightly without re-setting it. To distinguish the two we may call one the "morning bill" and the other with the verse the "evening bill".

In the fourth line from the top "whole number of nights 49 5"

is printed thus in both, the final 5 of the number separated by the space of a letter from the two preceding numerals; in eighth line the "H" in the name of the treasurer, H. Clay Ford, is directly beneath the "J" of the line above; in sixteenth line the "S" of "Supported" comes directly below the last stroke of the "N" in "Manageress" of the line above; in the twenty-seventh line the "H" in "Her original character" comes directly beneath the right hand upright of "H" in "Trenchard" in the line above; the first "H" of Harry Hawk in the cast is partly under "J" in the line above; in the line advertising the coming of Boucicault's drama, "The Octoroon," it is called "Great Sensation Drama." Moreover a few additional points can be gained from an examination of similar bills issued shortly before. These agree in not having a colon after the words "The Prices of Admission;" and they read "Orchestra Chairs" invariably. Both these bills measure—from a line drawn across the top of the words "Ford's Theatre" to the rule at the bottom above the printer's name and address,—eighteen and one-eighth inches. This morning bill is the one that usually occurs in facsimile state, but is nearly two inches shorter in length. It should also be noted, before going further that one character, "Rasper, the groom," appears in the morning bill that is omitted in the evening bill.

ANOTHER TYPE VARIATION

There is, however, another variation of this morning bill that has every appearance of having been printed with type, and by the same printer as the original and apparently about the same time. There is no doubt that a great demand sprang up immediately after the assassination for specimens of these bills as souvenirs. Those at the theatre on the night probably kept theirs, and those who did not attend and desired the bill had no recourse but to go to the printer and buy from him, and it may be that the demand was thus supplied. But though very carefully set up with the same types and having the same imprint, there are some variations that suggest it was hurriedly and not so carefully done, and later than April

14th. The main differences are that the advertisement of Boucicault's drama reads "Great Sensational Drama" instead of "Great Sensation Drama," that "Orchestra Chairs" has the word "Chairs" omitted, while it appears in the original and on other bills about the same date; that the separation of the numeral at the top "5" from "49" is corrected and the figures are closed together; and "Prices of Admission" has a colon (:) after it, while there is none in the original or other bills about the same date. Other slight changes can be found by comparing this variation of the bill or facsimiles of it with the resemblances given above of the two bills we have characterized as genuine. There seems to be no other conclusion possible in respect to this variation than that it was a later printing, and probably after the event. Yet it is this variation that is known as the "Buckingham" playbill, from the fact that J. E. Buckingham was doorkeeper at the theatre on the evening of the assassination and sold facsimiles of it as souvenirs.

FINIS

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